

# Connecticut Common School Journal.

VOL. IV.

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No. 12.

## EXTRACTS FROM RECENT SCHOOL DOCUMENTS IN OTHER STATES.

### NEW-YORK.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF COMMON SCHOOLS OF THE STATE OF NEW-YORK, MADE TO THE LEGISLATURE, January 5th, 1842. p. 173.

#### Statistics.

Number of Counties in the State,	59
" of Towns,	823
" of Cities,	9
" of organized School Districts,	10,886
" of Towns and Cities from which School returns were received,	835
Number of Districts ditto,	10,396
Average length of school in months,	8
Number of children over 4 and under 16 in the districts returned, <i>excluding New York city</i> ,	583,347
Number of all ages attending Common School,	562,198
Amount of money expended in 1840 for the payment of wages of teachers, <i>alone</i> ,	\$1,043,531 24
" " for district libraries,	\$98,903 00
Number of volumes added to school libraries in 1840,	200,000
Whole number of volumes in libraries Jan. 1841,	630,125
Estimated capital of the School Fund, including that portion of the United States Deposit	
Fund appropriated to school purposes,	\$5,819,947 98
Amount appropriated from School Fund,	\$235,000 00
Amount raised by tax by county supervisors,	\$305,252 95
" " " voluntary tax and under special statutes,	\$80,000 00
Amount raised from parents, &c. by rate or quarter bills,	\$483,479 54
Estimated salaries of County Superintendents,	\$30,000 00

### Progress of the Common School System.

It is gratifying to be able to state, that during the past year, the most ample indications of the steady advancement and increasing efficiency of our common schools have been manifested.—Public sentiment has co-operated with the Legislature and the department in demanding a more vigorous and thorough organization in the several districts—a higher grade of qualifications for teachers—a more strict and general supervision of the schools—and an increased degree of attention to the external arrangements and internal details of the system.

### Appointment of County Visitors in 1839.

By the 8th section of the act of 1839, relating to common schools, the Superintendent was authorized to "appoint such and so many persons as he shall, from time to time, deem necessary, to visit and examine into the condition of common schools in the county where such persons may reside, and report to the Superintendent on all such matters relating to the condition of such schools, and the means of improving them, as he shall prescribe." Under this provision, a board of visitors was organized in several of the counties of the State, and individual effort, voluntarily undertaken in others, with a view to the improvement and elevation of the schools.

From the investigations thus instituted, it was apparent that notwithstanding the beneficial influences which were dispensed by the liberal appropriations from the public treasury, as well as

by the commendable exertions of individuals, the schools were languishing for want of a systematic, constant and vigilant supervision. Their complete isolation from each other was also equally obvious; and frequent instances were discovered of the close proximity, for a series of years, of schools differing essentially from each other in their capacities for usefulness, and each ignorant of the condition, wants or acquisitions of the others. The arrangements of the several districts, with respect to the location of their sites, the construction of their buildings, their internal accommodations, and the various conveniences appertaining to the school room, were found in general extremely defective, while there was a want of general interest in the progress of the schools; and even the officers, whose special duty it was by law, periodically to visit and inspect them, had but partially and imperfectly complied with this requisition.

With a view to remedy these defects, and to invigorate the system in all its parts, the act of the last session was passed. Its most distinguishing feature was the institution of the office of deputy superintendent for each of the counties in the State.

### County or Deputy Superintendent.

The functions devolved upon this officer are chiefly of a supervisory nature. He is required to act in conjunction with the officers of the several districts and towns; to advise and counsel with them in the discharge of their various duties; to submit plans for the improvement and discipline of the schools and to visit and examine them as often as may be practicable; and the only positive powers conferred upon him are those connected with the examination and licensing of teachers. He will thus be enabled judiciously to direct the efforts of inhabitants and officers of the districts in the organization and arrangement of their schools; to afford them material assistance in all that relates to the discharge of their arduous, responsible and often complicated duties; to place at the command of the schools, teachers of the proper grade of qualifications; recommend and secure the gradual adoption of an uniform series of text books, and to avail himself of all the improvements in modes of teaching, of government and discipline, which he may be able to discover within the bounds of his jurisdiction, or learn from a constant correspondence with his co-adjutors throughout the State, and with the head of the department.

The several deputy superintendents have entered upon the discharge of the arduous and responsible duties devolved upon them, in a spirit and with a zeal and energy from which the most favorable results are confidently anticipated. The efficient co-operation of the inhabitants and offi-

cers of the respective districts within their jurisdiction, may doubtless be relied upon to enable them to carry out the enlightened views of the Legislature in the improvement and advancement of the common schools; and sustained by the invigorating influences of public sentiment and a due appreciation of the dignity and usefulness of their station, these agents of public instruction can scarcely fail in the successful accomplishment of the great object with which they have been entrusted.

#### *School Journal.*

The introduction into the several school districts of a periodical devoted exclusively to education, and containing in a official form, the laws relating to common schools, and the most important decisions and regulations of the Superintendent, under those laws, forms another valuable feature of the act of the last session. In addition to the facilities which it affords for a general dissemination, throughout every district, of the school laws and the decisions and instructions of the Superintendent, it forms an instructive and interesting medium of communication in reference to the subject of popular education generally—the improvements from time to time introduced into the system—the views of different individuals—the results of various experience—and the progress of elementary instruction in other States and countries.

In pursuance of the 32d section of the act, the late Superintendent subscribed for 12,000 copies of the "District School Journal," a monthly periodical, published by Francis Dwight, Esq. in the city of Albany, and exclusively devoted to the cause of education. One copy of each number is transmitted at the commencement of each month to the clerk or one of the trustees of each organized school district in the State. The advantages anticipated from such a periodical have been thus far fully realized by the department, as well as by the several districts where it has been received.

#### *New and Improved School Houses.*

In many of the districts where it has become necessary or expedient to erect new school houses, more enlarged and liberal views are beginning to prevail in this respect; and spacious and commodious buildings, often of stone or brick, with interior arrangements more in accordance with the physical economy of nature, have succeeded to the antiquated and inconvenient structures which have so long retarded the progress and discouraged the efforts of the friends of education. It is earnestly to be hoped that the revolution thus commenced will speedily pervade every section of the State. It is impossible to over-estimate the beneficial influences which result from an early and habitual experience of comfort, neatness and order, or to guard with too great vigilance against the deleterious effects, moral and physical, of indifference with respect to these essential requisites of the school room. In several of the country districts, two large rooms are provided for the instruction of the pupils—one under the charge of a male, and the other under that of a female teacher; and all experience has hitherto demonstrated the supe-

rior efficacy of this arrangement to any other, with reference as well to the progress of the students as to the aggregate expense of the course of instruction. Large play grounds are not unfrequently found attached to the school house; sometimes ornamented with flowers and shrubbery, and all the arrangements, external and internal, conducted with a view to the convenience and accommodation of those for whose use they are designed. The slight additional burthens thus imposed upon the inhabitants of the several districts, are scarcely felt, while the paramount interests of the schools are essentially and perceptibly advanced.

#### *Departments for the Education of Teachers.*

There are now twenty-three of these institutions, which annually send out a greater or less number of well educated candidates for teachers; and although a very small proportion of the eleven thousand school districts of the State can be supplied from these sources, yet the judicious distribution of their services throughout the different portions of the State, exerts a powerful tendency in creating a general demand for an equal standard of qualifications; while each district, in which these teachers are employed for any considerable period, is itself enabled, through their exertions and instruction, annually to prepare a numerous body of competent instructors. In this way, normal schools are perpetuated and extensively diffused throughout our borders, partaking of all the practical advantages, and subject to a few of the embarrassments or inconveniences incidental to establishments expressly founded for and devoted to this object. Under their combined influence, not only have the wages of teachers steadily increased, but their rank and station as public benefactors are beginning to be better appreciated; their labors are cheered and encouraged by the benign influences of an enlightened public sentiment; and the results are rapidly developing themselves in the increased usefulness and efficiency of the common schools.

#### *District Libraries.*

The institution and wide dissemination of district libraries, has been attended with the most favorable results upon the advancement and improvement of the district schools. It is indeed difficult to conceive of a measure more directly and certainly adapted in its effects, present and prospective, to extend the sphere of information, to invigorate the moral influences pervading an intelligent community, and to cement the institutions of our favored land, than the introduction into every school district of a judicious and well selected library, open to the perusal of all, and constantly increasing in extent and value.

#### *Want of Permanent Teachers.*

In many portions of the State it has been customary to employ teachers of ordinary qualifications, at the lowest prices for which their services could be obtained, and for a single term of three or four months.

At the end of the term, a vacation of several months usually intervenes, and is succeeded perhaps by the employment of a female teacher during the summer months, who is again suc-

ceeded by another and different teacher. The modes of instruction and discipline of each of these individuals are generally peculiar to themselves, and essentially different from each other. The studies of the pupils are consequently liable to constant interruption and derangement, and a systematic progress becomes impossible. Another evil, of increasing magnitude, is induced by this mode of procedure, in the vast multiplicity and entire want of uniformity or system of text books. Those adopted by one teacher are generally discarded by the next; and at the commencement of each term, parents are subjected to the expense, and the pupils to the embarrassment and inconvenience of procuring a new series of school books.

#### *Variety of Text Books.*

An enlightened regard to the progress of the pupils, and a just consideration of the interests of parents, alike dictate the adoption of some practicable measure by which this fertile source of embarrassment to the teacher, and inefficiency of the school, may be removed. This object, it is believed, may be accomplished, to a great extent, at least, through the medium of the deputy superintendents, and the officers of the several districts, without infringing in any respect upon the rights of publishers or authors, on the one hand, or the freedom of selection of parents, on the other, by the establishment at some convenient point in each county, of a general depository of standard and approved works, on all the various branches of instruction, and by the introduction into each town of a competent variety and supply of such works, at some central and commodious place, from whence the officers of each district, in conjunction with the deputy superintendent, the inspectors, and if deemed advisable, a committee to be named by the district, may select and recommend to the inhabitants such as they may deem best adapted to the progress and improvement of the pupils. Arrangements may easily be made by which the books so selected shall be placed at the command of every parent, at a slight advance on the original cost, and the district continue to be supplied with the same works, for as long a period as may be deemed desirable. Uniformity and system would thus be introduced into each district; the comparative value of different works fairly tested under the most favorable auspices; the confusion and embarrassment inseparable from the present system, avoided; a heavy item of expense on the part of parents removed, and the efforts of the teacher left unobstructed by the necessity of those minute subdivisions in classification, which are now unavoidable.

#### *Superiority of Female Teachers.*

The result of a careful investigation of the reports of the visitors of common schools in our own State, as well as of the reports of the several committees and boards of education in Massachusetts and Connecticut, concur in demonstrating the superior efficacy and utility, especially in the elementary branches, of schools taught by competent and well qualified female instructors. From the greater confidence which children naturally repose in them—the familiar acquaintance with the habits, dispositions and character of the young, which their situation and pursuits necessarily involve—and the peculiar adaptation of their minds to the business of instruction, it cannot be doubted that the more general employment of female teachers would essentially

promote the interests of education, and conduce to the welfare and prosperity of the common schools.

#### *Common Schools in Cities and Villages—Union Schools.*

In several of the cities and larger villages of the State, an increased interest has been manifested in the improvement of the public schools, and vigorous measures have been adopted for their advancement.

In Buffalo, Rochester, and Hudson, the schools are under the management of the municipal authorities, and a superintendent who devotes his whole time to their supervision.

The introduction in some of the larger villages of the State, of union schools, or the combination of a variety of separate district schools contiguously situated, into one of a higher order of excellence, has been attended with the happiest practical effects on the improvement of the system.

### PENNSYLVANIA.

#### EIGHTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF COMMON SCHOOLS OF PENNSYLVANIA, Jan. 1842.

##### *Progress of the System of Common Schools.*

It was not until 1835, that the foundations of a system of common school education were permanently laid. Although other States and countries may be in advance of us in this great enterprise, let it be remembered that they have reached their present position by the labor of years. With us the system is yet in its infancy; and we may proudly ask those who are prone to complain because all is not done at once, which requires the work of years to perform, and who are disappointed because youth is not maturity, to point to the history of schools in any State or nation, where so much has been done, in so short a period, as in this Commonwealth. The habits of the people were formed by the custom which prevailed from the settlement of the province up to 1835, that provision for general education was a private, not a public duty. To change habits thus sanctioned by ages, is not the work of a day or a year. The school-master's profession was not amongst the most honorable. The adoption of the system increased the demand for the services of these invaluable public servants, who, as has been justly remarked, are, next to mothers, the most important members of society. This extraordinary demand, and the inadequate compensation which custom had fixed, produced a want of a sufficient number of teachers for our Common Schools. The number of non-accepting districts, the active minorities in some of the accepting districts, and the large sums required for the erection of school houses, presented difficulties of no ordinary magnitude. They have been met, and, to a considerable extent, overcome. That we yet have much to do is certain; but all may be accomplished in a reasonable time, by acting with a wise reference to our own peculiar circumstances.

##### *Wants of the System.*

While schools are provided for the education of those destined for every pursuit of life, we have no seminaries for instructing teachers; and while all the treasures of knowledge and experience, relating to the various professions, trades and occupations, are embodied in books, pamphlets, treatises and newspapers, and liberally distributed, our school directors, committee-men and teachers, have to execute their numerous duties without being provided with the light of experience, which might be so readily furnished, and would be so highly useful.

##### *Teachers Seminaries.*

Seminaries for instructing teachers in the art of governing schools, and communicating instruction, are among the most important improvements that are furnished by the example of other States and countries, in which the greatest advances towards perfection have been made in common school education. The establishment of such institutions is respectfully recommended to the Legislature; for their direct tendency is to elevate the standard of education, to improve our schools, and add to their usefulness.

##### *District School Libraries.*

District school libraries are so obviously calculated to improve the public mind, and advance the cause of general education, that no expenditure can be made in the districts more beneficial than that which is applied to their establishment.

##### *School Journal.*

To aid the school directors, committees and teachers, in the performance of their various duties, I am constrained to



repeat the suggestion which has been frequently made, that the publication of a Common School Gazette, under the direction of the Superintendent, at the seat of Government, devoted entirely to the dissemination of information relating to the details of common school instruction, would be of very great practical value.

### KENTUCKY.

#### ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF COMMON SCHOOLS, FOR 1842.

##### Progress of the School System.

Another year's enlarged experience has impressed the Superintendent of Public Instruction more deeply than ever, with the need of the Common School System in this Commonwealth; of the general wisdom of its provisions; and of its entire practicability, if only fostered with a reasonable share of that public patronage, of which, more than any other measure of enlightened State policy, it is every where acknowledged to be worthy. He has now visited 73 out of the 90 counties in the State, and the few which he has not yet been able to visit, being scattered in every quarter, he may be said to have made himself familiarly acquainted with the wants and wishes of every portion of our fellow citizens. Nearly every mountain county has been visited, and the conviction is confirmed that the fraction of our population which is so scattered as to be unable to avail itself of the benefits of the system, under some of its various modes of adaptation, is exceeding small.

##### Itinerant Schools Recommended.

The system of itinerant schools seems perfectly adapted to our mountain counties, not only by bringing the school house within a proper distance of every dwelling, but by a virtual four-fold increase of the public bounty. It can be demonstrated, that even at the present rate of distribution, no neighborhood need to raise more than \$40, and may have occasion to raise only \$10, in addition to the public bounty, in order to secure the services of a teacher, at \$200 a year, for three months, in each of four neighborhoods.

##### Normal School Proposed.

In this connection he would again urge upon the consideration of the Legislature the importance of making a small annual appropriation from the avails of the School Fund, for the purpose of making a limited experiment of at least one Normal School.

##### School System of the City of Louisville.

The Legislature may well feel an honest pride, in helping to sustain such efficient practical, and noble efforts as Louisville is making for the thorough education of all classes of her population.

This system consists of three grades of schools, viz. Primary, Grammar, and Evening, and are all under the Superintendence of a Board, with a salaried Secretary, who devotes his whole time to his duties.

### MASSACHUSETTS.

ABSTRACT OF THE MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL RETURNS FOR 1840-41, prepared by the Secretary of the Board of Education. p. 328.

Fifth Annual Report of the Board of Education, together with the Fifth Annual Report of the Secretary of the Board. p. 135.

##### Aggregate of School Returns for 1840-41.

No. of Towns which have made Returns,	304
Population, (U. S. Census, 1840.)	734,258
Valuation, (State, 1840.)	\$299,057,634 31
No. of Public Schools,	3,103
No. of Scholars of all ages in the schools, in Summer,	131,761
do do do in Winter,	155,041
Average attendance in the Schools, in Summer,	96,892
do do do in Winter,	116,308
No. of persons between 4 and 16 years of age,	184,392
No. of persons under 4 years of age, who attend School,	7,823
No. over 16 years of age who attend School,	9,032
Average length of the Schools in months and days,	7 16
No. of Teachers, (including Summer and Winter terms,) Males,	2,491
Females,	4,112

##### Average wages paid per month, including board,

To Males,	\$33 80
To Females,	\$12 81

Average value of board per month, of Males,	\$8 62
of Females,	\$5 86

Average wages per month, exclusive of board, of Males,	\$25 18
of Females,	\$6 96

Amount of money raised by taxes for the support of Schools, including only the wages of Teachers, board and fuel,	\$491,015 23
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Amount of board and fuel contributed for Public Schools,	\$37,743 34
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No. of Incorporated Academies,	80
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Aggregate of months kept,	775 14
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Average number of Scholars,	3,825
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Aggregate paid for tuition,	\$56,533 89
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No. of Unincorporated Academies, Private Schools, and Schools kept to prolong Common Schools,	1,388
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Aggregate of months kept,	8,540 14
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Average number of Scholars,	31,794
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Aggregate paid for tuition,	\$259,123 87
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Amount of Local Funds,	\$325,852 02
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Income from same,	\$15,306 30
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Income of Surplus Revenue appropriated to Schools,	\$9,529 48
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##### Common School Library recommended and provided for.

The subject of School Library has been referred to in former reports. If, as it is stated in the report of the Secretary, there are more than one hundred towns in the State, (one third part of the whole number in it,) in which there is not a single town, social, or district school library, it would seem that a large portion of the children of the Commonwealth are growing up without adequate means for self-improvement. In view of this fact, the Board would respectfully suggest the expediency of furnishing some assistance to the districts, to aid and encourage them in procuring a school library. A sufficient sum for this purpose, might be taken from the State school fund, either at once, or in two or more successive years, without perceptibly impairing its present usefulness.

[This recommendation of the Board was acted upon by the Legislature, and the sum of fifteen dollars to be taken from the school fund, appropriated to each district, which would raise the like sum for the same purpose.]

##### The continuance of the Normal Schools recommended and provided for.

Of all the professions, that of a teacher is eminently practical. He has to deal with mind,—with mind, too, in all its variety of character. And yet, though he has to do with a subject which is least understood, and the most difficult to be comprehended, there is less attention paid to qualifications, than in any other profession or trade.

A few days, or, at at most, a few weeks, are sufficient to explain to a young man the principles of architecture, the uses of the different tools, and the strength, durability, and quality of materials; but, instead of sending him to a scientific lecturer, we apprentice him to a practical mechanic, that he may acquire a knowledge of his art by long years of patient and laborious application.

To qualify a student in the legal profession, we indeed place him under the care of scientific instructors; but, until the principles which he is taught are familiarized by practice, he will be of no advantage to his clients, and will arrive at no eminence in the ranks of his profession.

In the healing art, practice is the very handmaid of science; and when we call in either a physician or a surgeon, we pass by the man who has merely a knowledge of books, and seek the assistance of him who has grown wise in the school of experience.

Why should we not adopt the same course with those to whom we entrust the minds of our children? Why not qualify them beforehand for the discharge of their duties, instead of placing them at once in a most responsible situation, to gather wisdom at the expense of the minds and morals of their pupils?

These suggestions have been expressed, both before and since the establishment of the Normal Schools;—and the grants made for the establishment of those institutions were for the purpose of remedying existing evils. The schools have been in operation, exclusive of vacations, two of them for about two years, and the third for about one year. The question arises, have they answered, or have they indicated that they will answer, the object?—or, in other

words, have the unremitting exertions of three learned and experienced teachers, bestowed upon those who were anxious to learn the art of teaching; enabled those persons to perform with more ability the duties to which they have devoted themselves?

The success which has followed the labors of the Normal scholars is, perhaps, the best evidence in favor of the schools. But few of them have ever completed the course of education, contemplated either by the Board, or by the Principals of the different institutions. It would be reasonable, therefore, to suppose that, in some cases, they would fail to win the approval of their employers. But, in most instances, they have given, as it is believed, unexpected satisfaction; and, such is the estimation in which their services have been held, that many districts, which have once employed Normal scholars, are extremely unwilling to employ any other teachers.

The committee, therefore, in view of the facts which have fallen under their own observation, and in accordance with what they believe to be the wishes and the wants of the community, are unanimous in the expression of an opinion, that suitable provision should be made by the Legislature, for the continued support of the three Normal Schools.

[This recommendation was also adopted and the sum of six thousand dollars, annually, for three years, was appropriated to the support of Normal Schools.]

#### *New York School System commended.*

Although that State passed its first law for the establishment of Common Schools in 1812, yet it is now outstripping all the other States in the Union, in the comprehensiveness of its plans, and the munificence of its appropriations. A Common School library is now commenced in all the school districts of that State,—between ten and eleven thousand in number,—and the volumes distributed already amount to more than six hundred and thirty thousand. The same State has also provided for the appointment of one or more county superintendents of schools in each county, whose duty it is to examine all the schools, and report their condition to the State superintendent. To carry out more fully their extensive plans of improvement, the State has also authorized the superintendent to subscribe for a periodical devoted exclusively to the subject of Common School education, and to send a copy gratuitously to every district in the State.

[The Report of the Secretary of the Board is characterized by the ability, research, enthusiasm, and richness of thought and illustration, which have characterized all the educational documents from this officer.]

#### *Progress of the System since 1837.*

Since that time, (1837,) the amount of appropriations made by the towns for the wages and board of the teachers and fuel for the schools, has increased more than one hundred thousand dollars.

During the same time, the schools have been lengthened, on an average, almost three weeks each, which for three thousand one hundred and three, (the number of public schools kept last year in the State,) amounts in the whole to more than one hundred and seventy-five years.

The average wages of male teachers, for the same period, have advanced thirty-three per cent.; those of females, a little more than twelve and a half per cent. I am satisfied that the value of the services of both sexes has increased in a much greater ratio than that of their compensation.

There were one hundred and eighty-five more public schools last year, than in 1837, which is rather less than the ratio of increase in the number of children between the ages of 4 and 16 years. This favorable result is owing to the union of small districts. The number of male teachers has increased one hundred and twenty-one; that of females, five hundred twenty-one, which shows the growing and most beneficial practice of employing female teachers for small schools and female assistants in large ones.

Many towns in the State, during the last year, completed the renovation of all the schoolhouses within their respective limits.

From a perusal of the school committees' reports for the last year, it appears that the number of schools broken up by the insubordination of the scholars, was not more than one tenth part what it was for the preceding year. This gain to the honor of the schools,—or rather this exemption from disgrace,—is to be attributed to the combined causes of better modes of government by the teachers, more faithful supervision by the committees, a more extended person-

al acquaintance on the part of parents, and especially to the practice of making a report to the towns of the condition of the schools, and the conduct of the scholars. Few boys between the ages of fifteen and twenty-one years are so depraved and shameless as not to recoil at the idea of being reported for misconduct, in open town-meeting, and of having an attested record of their disgrace transmitted to the seat of government, with the chance, should they persist in their incorrigibility for two or three years, of finding themselves historically known to other countries and times, through the medium of the school abstracts. The cases of schools brought to a violent termination, during the last year, by the insubordination of the scholars, happened almost invariably, in those towns and sections of counties in the State, where I have found the least sympathy and co-operation in my labors.

The interior condition of the schools, as to order, thoroughness, progress, manners, and so forth, not being susceptible of tabular statement or statistical exhibition, must be inferred from these outward and palpable evidences of their advancement.

These are some of the results, at which the co-workers in the noble cause of education may congratulate themselves;—results which will furnish, at once the richest reward for the past efforts and the highest incentive to future exertions.

#### *Subdivision of School Districts arrested.*

A check has been given to the self-destructive practice of dividing and subdividing territory in order to bring the school near to every man's door. Our school districts are already so numerous, that just in the direct ratio in which the number is increased, is the value of our school system diminished. There is but one class of persons in the whole community,—and that class not only small in number, but the least entitled to favor,—who are beneficially interested in the establishment of small and feeble districts. This class consists of the very poorest teachers in the State, or of those who immigrate here from other States or countries, in quest of employment as teachers,—who are willing to teach for the lowest compensation,—and for whose services even the lowest is too high. These teachers may safely look upon the small and feeble districts as estates in expectancy. Such districts, having destroyed their resources by dividing them, must remain stationary from year to year, amidst surrounding improvement; and hence, being unable to command more valuable services, they will be compelled to grant a small annual pension to ignorance and imbecility, and this class of teachers stands ready to be their pensionaries.

#### *School-houses.*

The closeness of the relation which a school house well planned, situated, built and furnished, bears to order, good manners, intellectual proficiency, and the culture of the social and even the moral sentiments of the pupils, as well as upon the character of the district where it is situated, has not, in any previous year, been so vividly and earnestly presented:—and, on the other hand, the loss, mischief, disease, disgrace, of a mean school house. Have never been illustrated by so copious a reference to facts, or enforced by such an array of argument and by such earnestness of expostulation and pungency of ridicule.

A strained and uncomfortable posture long enforced; sudden transitions from one extreme of temperature to another, or excessive heat at the head, while the feet are benumbed with cold; a strong light striking directly into the eye, while the book or paper is thrown into shade; and the breathing of noxious air, are offences against the wise and benign laws of nature, which never escape with impunity. Though committed in ignorance, nay, though enforced by parental authority upon thoughtless and inexperienced childhood, they must be expiated by suffering; for they belong to that extensive class of "iniquities," which, when committed by the "fathers," are "visited upon the children unto the third and fourth generation." It is to be earnestly hoped that the school committees will persevere in the laudable practice they have so well begun, until there shall not remain a town in the State which boasts upon paper of its temples to science, but has naught to show for them, in reality, but receptacles for pestilence, confinement, and houses, not for the cure, but for the propagation, of disease.

#### *Amount and Regularity of School Attendance.*

If the number of children under 4 years of age, who attended school during the last year, be deducted from the average of attendance in summer, and the number of those over 16 years of age, who attended school, be also deducted

from the average of attendance in winter, the average attendance of those between 4 and 16 years of age, will stand thus:

For summer,	89,069
" winter,	107,276

Now, allowing twelve thousand as the number of children in the State, who derive their whole education from academies and private schools, and who, therefore, are not dependent upon the Common Schools at all; and deducting this number from the number of children in the State, who are between the ages of 4 and 16 years, (thus, 184,392—12,000=172,392,) and the proportion of those who attended the Common Schools in summer, compared with the whole number dependent upon those schools, is as 89,069 to 172,392, or a very little more than one half; and the portion of those who attended the same schools, in winter, as compared with the whole number dependent upon them, is as 107,276 to 172,392, or considerably less than eleven seventeenths.

Hence it appears that the amount of absence of those supposed to be dependent upon the Common Schools, was,

For summer,	83,323
" winter,	65,116

Supposing this enormous privation, instead of being spread over the whole State, and being lost to the sight of men by its diffusion and by its commonness, had fallen exclusively upon a single section;—supposing that a single portion of the territory of the Commonwealth, had been selected and doomed to bear the entire loss,—in that case, the absence, even in winter, when it was more than eighteen thousand less than in summer, would have exceeded the number of all the children between 4 and 16 years of age, in the five western counties of Berkshire, Hampshire, Hampden, Franklin and Worcester. It would have exceeded, by more than ten thousand, all the children between 4 and 16 years of age, in the six south-eastern counties of Norfolk, Bristol, Plymouth, Barnstable, Dukes county and Nantucket; and it would have been nearly equal to all the children, between the same ages, in the three great counties of Suffolk, Essex and Middlesex;—the amount of absence in the summer, indeed, would have exceeded the number of children in the three last-named counties, by more than sixteen thousand. Were all the children in either of these three great sections of the Commonwealth wholly deprived of the privileges of a Common School education, would not the State,—foreseeing the inevitable calamities which, in the immutable order of events, must result from rearing so large a portion of its population in ignorance,—be filled with alarm, and impelled by the instinct of self-preservation, to seek for an antidote? But is the evil which this fact infallibly prophecies, any less dangerous or imminent, because, instead of shrouding one particular section of the Commonwealth in night, it is diffused over the entire surface of the State, darkening the common atmosphere and blinding the vision of the whole people?

#### *Sketch of a Faithful, and an Unfaithful Teacher.*

There is a teacher in this State, who, although he has labored constantly in his profession for thirty years, does not, even now, bear a recitation, without first going carefully over the lesson,—not so much to revise principles which must already be familiar to him, as to pre-adapt his questions and explanations to the different attainments and capacities of his pupils. When out of school, he spends many hours daily, in preparing for its exercises, and in devising the wisest means for correcting, by intellectual and moral influences, any remissness or waywardness in individual scholars. In these hours of study and contemplation he enkindles in his own spirit that fervency of Christian love, and digests those plans of practical wisdom, by virtue of which, without ever resorting to corporal punishment or emulation,—or appealing to any low motive whatever, he secures the greatest extent of intellectual proficiency, and fuses and remoulds the most refractory dispositions. The zeal and progress of the pupils in this school, correspond with the assiduity and conscientiousness of its teacher. What parent worthy of the name, would not submit to any sacrifice to secure such a teacher for his children, rather than to employ one who, after spending a long summer on a farm, or in a shop, or in trafficking in small goods, from town to town, suddenly suspends his accustomed occupation, and, taking a small bundle of books under his arm, with a ferule conspicuously displayed on its outside, enters the schoolroom, without revising a lesson he is to teach, or bestowing a thought upon the principles by which he is to govern, but rashly trusting to extemporaneous light and in-

spiration for his guidance, in all cases of doubt or difficulty? Fertilizing and purifying influences are richly showered down, by the one, fulfilling the promise of a most luxuriant growth; while the other, not only destroys the hope of a harvest, but impoverishes the very soil on which it should have flourished.

#### *Inequality in the means of Education.*

Much has been, and much still continues to be, both said and written respecting that equality in the laws, and equality under the laws, which constitutes the distinctive feature of a Republican government. By abolishing the right of primogeniture, and entails, by the extension of the elective franchise, and in other ways, much has been done towards realizing the two grand conceptions of the founders of our government, viz., that political advantages should be equal, and then, that celebrity or obscurity, wealth or poverty, should depend on individual merit. But the most influential and decisive measure for equalizing the original opportunities of men, that is, equality in the means of education, has not been adopted. In this respect, therefore, the most striking and painful disparities now exist.

Under these different circumstances, the most striking inequalities have grown up. According to the Graduated Tables inserted at the end of the school abstract, it appears that, in regard to the amount of money appropriated for the support of schools, the difference between the foremost and the hindmost towns in the State, is more than seven to one!

There were five towns, [viz. Milton, Boston, Chelsea, Charlestown, and Medford,] which appropriated, for the last year, more than five dollars for the education of each child within their limits, between the ages of 4 and 16 years.

11 other towns [viz. Dorchester, New Bedford, Brookline, Worcester, Lowell, Northampton, Dedham, Hull, Bolton, Waltham, and Duxbury,] appropriated more than \$4 for each child within the same years.

28 other towns appropriated more than \$3 for each child.

123	"	"	2	"
139	"	"	1	"
1	"	"	less than	1

The average of appropriations for the whole State, was two dollars and seventy-one cents, for each child between the above-mentioned ages. No town, in the counties of Berkshire or Barnstable, came up to the average of the State, and in the county of Bristol, only one town, (New Bedford,) equalled it.

It is a common device of geographers, for illustrating the different degrees of civilization or barbarism existing in different parts of the globe, to variegate the surface of a map with different colors and shades, from the whiteness which represents the furthest advances in civilization and Christianity, to the blackness denoting the lowest stages of barbarism. A similar map has been prepared, representing the educational differences between the different departments in the kingdom of France. A map of the different towns of Massachusetts, drawn and colored after such a model, would exhibit edifying, though humiliating contrasts. It would show that, during the last half century, the most efficient cause of social inequality has been left to grow up amongst us unobserved; and it would furnish data for the prediction, to a great extent, of the future fortunes of the rising generation, in the respective towns.

I have met many individuals, who, having failed to obtain any improvement in the means of education in their respective places of residence, have removed to towns whose schools were good, believing the sacrifice of a hundred, or even several hundred dollars, to be nothing, in comparison with the value of the school privileges secured for their children by such removal. Still more frequently, when other circumstances have rendered a change of domicile expedient, has this principle of selection governed in choosing a residence. I doubt not there are towns, where parsimonious considerations relative to the schools have obtained the ascendancy, which have actually lost more, in dollars and cents, by a reduction of taxable property and polls, than, in their shortsightedness, they supposed they had gained by their scanty appropriations, besides inflicting a sort of banishment upon some of their most worthy and estimable citizens.

#### *Instance of liberality in regard to appropriations.*

In some towns it has been the practice for several years, for the school committee to report to the town what sum will be wanted for the ensuing year,—upon which the town votes the appropriation according to the estimate submitted. In one town, the prudential committees of the districts transmit an estimate to the town's committee of the sums



The third class of parents is found in most districts. They really take an active part in advancing the cause of education. They keep their children punctually at school. They even visit the school occasionally. But they do not regard the teacher's position. They do not attach to his calling that degree of importance which belongs to it. They deem it an avocation of necessity, and therefore one of servility. Its dignity as a profession, they do not recognize. While the mere spiritual teacher is treated with the high respect due to his holy office, and the village attorney, the physician, the merchant, the mechanic, the farmer, with all those nameless acts of civility which common politeness and common sense require between neighbors, the school master is looked upon, in too many instances, with disdain and contempt. He is seldom taken by the hand in the friendly grasp of equality, seldom permitted to participate in the social intercourse of his district, seldom visited in school with any other feeling than merely to see that the amount of labor exacted is accomplished, and never at his boarding house, where his heart, by unburthening itself of its long pent up griefs, might find the sympathies so essential to its assuagement. In the street, his presence only evokes ideas associated with ferules, raw-hides and other instruments of torture for unruly boys, his mode of government as *master* and not of *discipline* as *teacher* being uppermost in the mind. In short, the parents referred to, regard the school teacher as a mere servant, hired to do a job that nobody else can do, and fit for nothing else, morally, intellectually or socially; and when the two or three months for which he was employed expires, he is at liberty to "quit" as soon as he please.

*Female Teachers.*

An elementary school, where the rudiments of an English education only are taught, such as reading, spelling; writing and the outlines barely of geography, arithmetic and grammar, requires a female of practical common sense, with amiable and winning manners, a patient spirit, and a tolerable knowledge of the springs of human action. A female thus qualified, carrying with her into the school room the gentle influences of her sex, will do more to inculcate right morals and prepare the youthful intellect for the severer discipline of its after years, than the most accomplished and learned male teacher. The heathen notion, that females have no souls, was exploded with the occasions that gave it birth among the wrangling schoolmen of antiquity. It is now generally admitted that they not only have souls, but souls capable of a high order of intellectual development; while, in the matter of heart and all those holier emotions which give to humanity its crowning glory, they leave the "lords of creation" far in the rear.

*The New York Plan of County Superintendents recommended.*

Within the past year, the State of New York has adopted a plan of superintendence for her thousands of common schools which commends itself to our attentive consideration. It is the appointment for each county of a deputy superintendent, whose duties of supervision shall be co-extensive with the schools of his circuit. To his care are committed the educational interests of the county. He examines all the teachers, visits all the schools, collects all the statistics, sees that the laws are efficiently executed, ascertains their defects and suggests improvements, and otherwise promotes sound education.

The board of supervisors are required to appoint the deputy superintendent. He holds his office two years, subject to removal by the board for causes stated. He receives two dollars for each day necessarily spent in the discharge of his duties, but the whole amount in any one year is not to exceed five hundred dollars. One half is paid by the county, the other half out of the school fund.

Such is the New York plan. It is worthy of the "Empire State." It is for the Legislature to say whether Michigan will do well to adopt a similar plan or rely yet longer upon the present defective means of supervision. It is believed that the change suggested will insure greater efficiency in the execution of our school laws, better teachers, better schools, higher interest and more harmonious action among parents, and greater economy.

*School Government.*

The reports show that the old fashioned mode of beating knowledge into the brain is yet kept up to an alarming extent. The usual appliances are pinching, cuffing, pulling hair and noses, throwing books and rulers at the heads of unruly scholars, compelling them to stand until fatigued into submission, locking up in dark places to scare away the evil genius that possesses them, shaming and other varieties of torture. Nothing so truly indicates a teacher's unfitness for duty as a disposition to be thus tampering with a child's capabilities of physical suffering; nothing so completely unnerves the energies of his school as this invariable resort, on the most trifling occasions, to instruments of torture as the only means of enforcing his rules.

*The Nature of Common School Education.*

Its true office is to discipline the mind; to call into active and unremitted exercise the affections of the heart; and to develop and invigorate the physical powers. Of what use is the most gifted intellect, if the heart, which gives it direction, be wrong? How much good would that intellect confer upon mankind, if its bodily frame-work were inadequate to sustain the tremendous pressure from within? Education, like nature, has a taste for the beautiful and consults proportion and harmony in all its operations. Its first great principle then is, so to proportion and harmonize the intellectual, physical and moral powers as to make them co-operate equally toward the designed end. If you educate the mind and body, but neglect the heart, you may raise up a giant frame and a giant intellect, but you do it at the peril of all that's most holy and attractive in spiritualized human nature, and run the risk of elevating to a most dangerous position some moral monster whose sphere of mischief shall only be limited by his aptitude for it. Then again, if you educate only the mind and heart, you do the grossest injustice both to man and his Creator; because, by such an act, you virtually question the necessity of physical organization.

*Uniformity of School Books.*

The want of uniformity in the books used, is the burthen of complaint through all the reports. By reference to the list, the variety of books can be seen. Many of them are good, many indifferent, and many positively bad. Even if they were all good books, and either author could be recommended, the endless variety of them would puzzle any teacher. The books used in one school not only differ from those used in another, but they differ throughout the same school.

*School Houses.*

If we would educate healthy children and consequently make valuable citizens, the school house, where much of their time is spent, should be built in a pure atmosphere, large enough to accommodate all comfortably, capable of being well ventilated, and so arranged within and without as to make each scholar happy and not feel like a criminal under confinement.

*School Libraries.*

The vast importance of judiciously selected libraries, as a means of perfecting or rather of advancing towards perfection common school education, is too universally admitted to render valid any excuse, but that of stern necessity, for not introducing them into our districts.

*School System of Massachusetts, commended.*

In October last, the Superintendent had occasion to visit Massachusetts. The result of his observations, hurried as they were, was a renewed conviction that the Massachusetts school system, as tested by the universality and elevated character of the schools, stands preeminently above that of any other State. With only a nominal public fund, her plan of education embraces every child within her limits. Her direct taxes for support of schools are enormous, and yet they are paid with perfect good will. The aggregate school taxes for the last year were about half a million of dollars. These taxes are paid by the property of the people; and, as a general thing, the wealthiest individuals, those who pay the most, are the warmest advocates of the system, even where they have no children of their own to share its benefits.

## OHIO.

## REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE ON THE CONDITION OF COMMON SCHOOLS IN THE STATE OF OHIO, TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, January 1842.

*How to secure the accountability and services of School Officers.*

The remedy which has suggested itself as the most easy, and at the same time, the most effectual, is so to amend the law as, that whenever the officer or officers charged with the execution of the school law in any district, township, or county, shall entirely fail to perform his or their duty, in the manner prescribed by law, such district, township, or county, as the case may be, shall, for the current year, be deprived of its proportion of the school fund; and that the same shall, by the proper officer, be reserved from distribution until such delinquency shall be remedied. Should a provision of this kind be adopted, it would at once appeal to the great body of the people, and, therefore, in all elections for such officers, both their capacity and dispositions to regard a due execution of the school law, as a matter of primary importance, would become prominent points in the discussion of fitness for office. Every man would then look upon himself as in some measure a minister of the law in his own defence, against the negligence and incompetency of unworthy officers.

In matters pertaining to public service, as well as in every thing else, experience is always found to be of consequence, and it is no less true in regard to officers of an humble grade, than to those of greater importance. If, then, it is desirable to insure the services of experienced men, the most certain means for the attainment of that object is to lengthen the period of service. It is alleged that much of the inefficiency of our school system may be traced to the want of experience in the directors of districts. As at present organized, the whole system depends upon those officers. If they can be made to discharge their duties correctly, all is safe. Would it not then be well to change the period of their services, from one, to three years, and by such a process that one will be elected every year. By adopting this mode, there will always be two in office, who will have at least an opportunity of learning something of the nature of the services to be rendered.